

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6785

INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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UNCLAS NEW DELHI 1865

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TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK, US

SUBJECT: PRESS CRITICISM OF REPORTED U.S. ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN
CONTINUES

BEGIN SUMMARY:INDIAN MEDIA ON SUNDAY AND MONDAY FRONT-PAGED
NEWS ON THE REPORTED U.S. DECISION TO LIFT ARMS EMBARGO TO PAKISTAN.
EDITORIAL COMMENT CONTINUED TO BE CRITICAL. END SUMMARY.

1. THREE LEADING ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS (TIMES OF INDIA,
HINDUSTAN TIMES AND PATRIOT) APPEARING IN NEW DELHI ON SUNDAY
MORNING LED FRNT PAGES WITH STORIES ABOUT AN "URGENT"
COMMUNICATION FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN HAD ADDRESSED TO DR. KISSINGER
A DAY BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO IN
WASHINGTON. CREDITED TO PRESS TRUST OF INDIA AND UNITED NEWS
OF INDIA WIRES, THE ACCOUNTS STRESSED THAT INDIA HAS TOLD THE U.S.
ITS REPORTED DECISION WOULD "UPSET" INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND
HAMPER THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS IN THE SUBC-CONTINET.

2. THE ITEMS ADDED THAT MR. CHAVAN IS BELIEVED TO HAVE POINTED
OUT THAT ARMING OF PAKISTAN WOULD BE "FATAL" AND THERE WAS
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"ABSOLUTELY NO THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF PAKISTAN."

3. TWO SUNDAY PAPERS FRONT-PAGED THREE-COLUMN CARTOONS EACH ON THE SUBJECT. THE HINDUSTAN TIMES CARTOON, FACING THE LEAD STORY, SHOWED PRESIDENT FORD AND PRIME MINISTER GANDHI BOTH BLOWING A BANDAGED BALLOON MARKET "INDO-U.S. RELATIONS." THE PRESIDENT WAS SHOWN HOLDING A BATON," ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN." THE TIMES OF INDIA SHOWED THE U.S. PRESIDENT TYING A TARGET PRACTICE BOARD(MARKED "LIFTING EMBARGO") AROUND THE NECK OF A LADY, "SIMLA SPIRIT," HOLDING AN OLIVE BRANCH. DRESSED IN A COWBOY OUTFIT, MR. BHUTTO IS SHOWN HOLDING U.S. ARMS.

4. SIDE BARS INCLUDED "LEADING U.S. PAPERS INDICT MOVE," QUOTING EDITORIALS FROM ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH AND THE BALTIMORE SUN.

5. IN A WASHINGTON-DATELINED DISPATCH, T.V. PARASURAM REPORTED IN THE INDIAN EXPRESS THAT THE U.S. IS EXPECTED TO ANNOUNCE ITS DECISION IN "TWO TO THREE WEEKS." HE PREDICTED THAT "THE ARMS QUANTITIES INVOLVED WILL BE LIMITED AT LEAST INITIALLY."

6. REPORTAGE ON MONDAY, ALTHOUGH ON FRONT PAGES, WAS BRIEF AND MOSTLY NON-PROMINENT. LOCAL NEWS AGENCY REPORTS QUOTED THE DEFENSE MINISTER SWARAN SINGH STATEMENT IN BANGALORE THAT THE REPORTED U.S. DECISION WILL " LEAD TO NEW TENSIONS" IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND "ADVERSELY AFFECT" THE SIMLA PACT. THEY QUOTED THE MINISTER SAYING I THE U.S. DECISION WILL ALSO MAKE PAKISTAN "MORE INTRANSIGENT."

7. IN A LEAD EDITORIAL, "FALSE MOVE," THE HINDUSTAN TIMES NOTED: "IT IS NOT THAT INDIA DECIES PAKISTAN THE RIGHT TO ACQUIRE ARMS. IT IS THAT INDIA EXPECTS THE UNITED STATES TO KEEP ITS COMMITMENTS." REPEATED DURING DR. KISSINGER'S INDIA VISIT LAST OCTOBER. THE INDIAN EXPRESS RAN ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT PARASURAM'S APPRAISAL THAT THE U.S. "BELIEVES IN KEEPING ITS OPTIONS OPEN. PERHAPS IT WILL LIMIT DAMAGE TO INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS BY CONFINING ARMS SUPPLIES TO SYMBOLIC PROPORTIONS." THE PATRIOT RAN A LENGTHY EDIT-PAGE NEW DELHI REPORT ON "ARMS FOR PINDI: LESSONS FOR FOREIGN OFFICE." THE REPORT CRITICIZED "THE DANGEROUS MACHINATIONS OF THE U.S. AUTHORITIES " IN "DUMPING ARMS IN THE SOUTHERN UNDERBELLY OF ASIA." IT ALLEGED THAT WASHINGTON HAS UNCLASSIFIED

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"RESORTED TO ITS TIME-WORN GAME OF PROVOCATION" BY PLANNING "TO REINFORCE ITS HOLD" ON PAKISTAN BECAUSE "MORE ARMS WOULD MEAN LESS DEMOCRACY." WARNING THE FOREIGN OFFICE AGAINST THIS GRAND STRATEGY" OF THE U.S., THE ARTICLE CHIDED THE SOUTH BLOCK FOR DEMONSTRATING "ITS CAPACITY TO BE WISE ONLY AFTER THE EVENT." SCHNEIDER

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